

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA
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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 SUVA 1319

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SUBJECT: U.S. POLICY IN THE PACIFIC

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1. THIS IS THE SECOND OF A TWO-PART MESSAGE CONTAINING SUGGESTIONS OR, BETTER, REMINDERS OF POINTS THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE MAY WANT TO INCLUDE IN HIS TESTIVMONY. PART ONE INCLUDED A QUICK CHECKLIST ON INHERENT STRENGTHS AS WELL AS WEAKNESSES OF THE ISLAND SOCIETIES WVHICH HAVE LONG EXISTED IN ISVOLUTION FROM EACH OTHER AS WELL AS THE REST OF THE WORLD.

2. DESPITE THE FAIRLY REASVONABLE STANDARDS OF LIVING, EVEN IF IN THE FORM OF EFFOVRTLESS, BUT ADEQUATE SUBSISTENCE,, POPULATIONS WITH RISING EXPECTATIONS FOR MODERIZATION ARE BRINGING PRESSURE NON GOVERNMENTS WITH LIMITED RESOURCES TO PROVIDE BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MATERIAL PROGRESS. THIS IS INTRODUCING AN ELEMENT OF RAGILITY WHICH GOES BEYOND THE QUESTION OF ECONGMIC VIABILITY#. IT THREATENS TRADITIONAL SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND VALUES WHICH PTHE U.S. INTENDS TO FOLLOW CVLOSELY.

3. IN SPITE OF ECONOMIC SIMILARITIES AND TRADITIONALN JEALOUSIES, THE ISLAND STATES REALIZE THAT REGIONAL COOPERATION MAY BE THE KEY TO THEIR ECONOMIC SURVIVAL,
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EVEN WHEN THEIR LEADERS APPEAR TO PAY ONLY LIP SERVICE TO REGIONALISM AS THEY GATHER AND SLOWLY DILIBERATE THEIR WAY THROUGH COMPRIMISE TO CONSENSUS. ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE GROWTH OF REGIONALISM SHOULD, NEVERTHELESS, BE THE IMPORTANT ASPECT OF OUR POLICY TOWARDS THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

4. REGIONALISM HAS BECOME THE FOCUS OF OUR MODEST

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE AREA. IN LATE 1976, THE SECRETARY OF STATE DETERMINED THAT THE U.S. SHOULD PROCEED WITH A MODEST DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC. ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE EX-COLONIAL POWERS CONTINUE TO BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR MEETING AID NEEDS IN THE REGION, A SMALL U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS NOW UNDERWAY WORKING PRINCIPALLY THROUGH U.S. PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS TO REGIONAL PROJECTS AND INSTITUTIONS.

5. THE U.S. THROUGH MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE REGION'S POLITICAL GROWTH AND SOPHISTICATION AND TO ITS ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

8. WHILE REMAINING AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE SPC, THE U.S. SHOULD BE ALERT AND SYMPATHETIC TO ANY CHANGES WHICH THE ISLAND STATES MAY DEEM NECESSARY IN THE SPC COMPOSITION AND METHOD OF OPERATION TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE EMERGENCE OF SO MANY INDEPENDENT ISLANDS IN THE AREA AND THE CONCOMITANT REDUCTION OF THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITIES CARRIED BY THE FORMER METROPOLITAN POWERS AT THE TIME THE SPC WAS FOUNDED IN 1947.

7. THE U.S. SHOULD BE PARTICULARLY ATTENTIVE TO THE EVOLUTION OF THE PACIFIC FORUM, THE REGIONAL GROUP OF INDEPENDENT ISLANDS THAT SEEKS TO COORDINATE POLITICS
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AS WELL AS TO THE FORUM'S ECONOMIC ARM THE SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SPEC). EVENTUALLY THE ISLANDS MUST COME TO GRIPS WITH THE QUESTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SPEC AND SPC TO AVOID POTENTIAL DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND UNPRODUCTIVE COMPETITION. THAT STEPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN BY THE ISLANDS TWO PROVIDE FOR A DIVISION OF FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS SHOWS THEIR AWARENESS OF THIS POTENTIAL PROBLEM AND SOPHISTICATION IN SEEKING A VIABLE SOLUTION. THE U.S. SHOULD LEAVE IT TO THE ISLANDERS TO SETTLE THE PROBLEM SHOULD IT BECOME SERIOUS.

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8. THE U.S. HAS PARTICIPATED IN THE DELIBERATIONS WHICH RESULTED AS A DRAFT CONVENTION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY, AN ORGANIZATION WHICH CAN BE HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF VITAL FISHING RESOURCES IN THE PACIFIC.

9. AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION, IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION, MARINE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, IMPORT SUBSTITUTION PROJECTS ARE ALL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES WHICH DEMAND ATTENTION. THE UN ORGANIZATIONS AND THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK WITH A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF U.S. FUNDING HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN TACKLING THESE PROGRAMS AND DESERVE OUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

10. STRATEGICALLY THE SOUTH PACIFIC BENEFITS FROM OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE ANZUS TREATY WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY REQUIREMENTS OR OBLIGATIONS IN THE ISLANDS. WE SHOULD CONTINUE THIS POLICY OF LIMITING MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE ISLAND NATIONS TO OCCASIONAL JOINT NAVAL MANEUVERS AND GOOD-WILL CALLS BY U.S. NAVAL VESSELS. MILITARY ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN, AND SHOULD REMAIN, NEARLY NON-EXISTENT.

11. IT IS IMPORTANT AS WE CONTINUE AND IN SOME AREAS SLOWLY EXPAND OUR PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS THAT WE DO NOT LET OUR DESIRE TO SEE PROGRESS IN THE REGION TEMPT US TO PROVIDE TOO STRONG GUIDANCE
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TO THE SMALL ISLAND NATIONS OR OVERWHELM WITH OUR PRESENCE. THERE REMAINS FROM WWII UNSUSPECTED RESERVOIR OF GOODWILL FOR THE U.S. AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC. THE COUNTRIES THERE ARE FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACIES WHICH HAVE SHOWN AN APPRECIATION FOR AND HAVE EFFECTIVELY PROTECTED THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THEIR CITIZENS THEY ARE OPPOSED TO TOTALITARIAN FORMS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE REPRESSIVE RULERSHIPS WHICH THEY ENGENDER. THEY ARE ADMIRABLY FREE OF ARMED DISSIDENCE AND POLITICAL STRIFE WHICH HAVE SO HAMPERED THE PROGRESS OF OTHER DEVELOPING NATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

12. THEY ARE ALSO EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO PAST EXCESSES
IN EXPERIMENTS WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE PACIFIC AND
SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE EXPANSION OF BIG POWER
INFLUENCE IN THEIR REGION. WE CAN AFFORD TO LET MORE
RATIONAL ATTITUDES DEVELOP WITH TIME WITHOUT INTERFERENCE
ON OUR PART.

13. LIFE IN THE PACIFIC HAS BEEN PEACEFUL FOR MANY YEARS
NOW; PACIFIC LEADERSHIP WILL BE CAUTIOUS IN ACCEPTING
CHANGE, EVEN THAT WHICH MAY HAVE ECONOMIC BENEFITS, IF
SUCH CHANGE IS PERCEIVED AS A THREAT TO THEIR INDEPENDENCE
AND ULTIMATE WELL-BEING. IT IS IN THE U.S. INTEREST TO
SEE THE ISLAND NATIONS PROSPER. IT IS ALSO IN OUR INTEREST
TO RESPECT THE DELIBERATENESS WITH WHICH THEY APPROACH
WHAT WE MAY SEE AS READY SOLUTIONS TO THEIR PROBLEMS.
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